

The National Children's Study of Environmental Effects on Child Health and Development

Carole A. Kimmel, Ph.D.

Senior Scientist

Office of Research and Development/National Center for Environmental Assessment

(202) 564-3307

kimmel.carole@epa.gov

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The National Children's Study is a longitudinal cohort study of environmental effects on child health and development. Mandated by the Children's Health Act of October 2000, the National Children's Study is a partnership effort between the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Within the DHHS, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD/NIH) is the lead agency for planning and implementing the study. The National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS/NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) are also involved in the planning. Planning and protocol development for the National Children's Study is well underway, and the study is expected to be launched in late 2005. Information about the study may be obtained from the Web site: www.NationalChildrensStudy.gov.

The National Children's Study will enroll women as early as possible in pregnancy, and perhaps some before conception, and will follow their children into adulthood (approximately 21 years of age). Outcomes of interest include pregnancy outcomes, growth and neurobehavioral development, asthma, injuries, and obesity and physical development. The environmental factors to be studied include chemical, physical, biological, behavioral, and social factors, as well as genetic factors and their interactions with the environment. The study will serve as a national repository in that it will include collection of information to address specific hypotheses, as well as data and biological and environmental sample storage to address issues that arise in the future.